

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2011**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at the American Legion Building, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond.

Members Present

- John A. Anderson
- William G. Haneke
- Donald Kaiserman
- Thad Jones
- Sandra Love
- George Melnyk
- William Nicholas
- Al Sample
- Christopher Stolle
- Jack Hilgers, representing the Veterans Services Foundation
- George Corbett, representing the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
- Paul Galanti, Commissioner of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Richard Anderson
- Mamye BaCote
- John Edwards
- Kate Kohler
- Don Lecky
- Toddy Puller
- J. W. Peyton Robertson

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Jim Hopper, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security
- Carol Rauschberg, Department of Human Resources Management
- Cynthia Norwood, Office of the Attorney General
- Anne Atkins, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Judy Reid, DVS
- Tammy Davidson, DVS
- Danielle Weaver, DVS
- John Anderson, DVS
- Sandra Ranicki, DVS
- Annie Walker, DVS

Materials Distributed in the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Reports (Agenda Item III)
 - Joint Leadership Council Report
 - Veterans Services Foundation Report
 - Department of Veterans Services Report
- Old Business (Agenda Item IV)
 - Summary of BVS EO29 Recommendations and Position Paper
 - Summary of JLC EO29 Recommendations and Position Paper
- New Business
 - Proposed committee assignments
 - Proposed 2012 meeting schedule
 - Proposed 2012 Action Plan
 - DVS Service Area Information-only Presentations*
 - Benefits
 - Education
 - Care Centers
- Other
 - BVS Roster
 - BVS By-Laws

*Copies are not included in these minutes, but are available on request from DVS.

Call to Order

Chairman Thad Jones called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Roll Call and Quorum Determination

The roll was called and with 12 of 19 members present a quorum was determined. Ms. Sandra Love arrived about 15 minutes later, bringing the number of members present to 13. Mr. George Corbett was present as the representative for the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) of Veterans Service Organizations and Mr. Jack Hilgers as the representative for the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF).

Chairman Jones led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Chairman Jones introduced Mr. William Nicholas and mentioned Mr. Don Lecky as new board members. Mr. Lecky was unable to attend the meeting due to scheduling conflict. Mr. Nicholas gave a brief synopsis of his background and said that he liked to be called “Nick.”

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Jones stated that he would like to suggest a change to the draft Agenda. Change Item IV Old Business to Unfinished Business to conform with the newly revised *Robert's Rules of Order*. He then asked for a motion to approve the agenda with the suggested change (Attachment I).

Mr. Don Kaiserman made a **motion** to approve the Agenda with the suggested change, **seconded** by Mr. George Melnyk. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones then asked the DVS staff to introduce themselves along with the guests present. Commissioner Galanti stated that many DVS staff members are in attendance and introduced them. (Their names and organizations are recorded above.)

Approval of August 10, 2011 minutes

Chairman Jones stated that the August 10, 2011 minutes were distributed electronically. He then asked if there are any corrections to the minutes. Hearing none Chairman Jones stated that the minutes are considered approved as submitted.

Reports

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

Mr. George Corbett thanked the Board on behalf of the JLC and its Chair, Ms. Jenny Holbert. He reviewed the report (*Attachment 2*). The last JLC meeting was held on November 9, 2011. Mr. Corbett stated that the Council endorsed and supports the EO29 recommendations submitted by the BVS. A JLC sponsor was assigned to recommendations 1-4 to help advance the Board's recommendations. The BVS would be responsible for advocating recommendations 5 and 6. The next Council meeting will be on December 20, 2011 after the Governor releases his budget.

Veterans Services Foundation

Mr. Jack Hilgers gave the VSF report (*Attachment 3*) in Chair Dave Holt's absence. Mr. Hilgers briefly reviewed the actions taken at the last meeting on November 2, 2011. The next meeting will be in March 2012 after General Assembly adjourns.

Chairman Jones asked Mr. Hilgers to recap the results of the study done on the partnership between the JLC and BVS along with the VSF and their relationships with DVS as a refresher for the members, but particularly for the new member, Mr. Nicholas. Mr. Hilgers briefly reviewed the material he had presented at the BVS June 15, 2011 meeting which are contained in the minutes of that meeting and Attachment 2 of those minutes.

Chairman Jones stated that this is important information because the General Assembly session is coming up in 2012 and BVS has some legislative items for which BVS is responsible. The Board will be involved tracking bills and working alongside the JLC. Everyone is invited to the General Assembly sessions, but particularly when the legislation of interest to the Board is being heard.

Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner Galanti stated that every Governor in Virginia only has one General Assembly session in which he can submit a budget and govern its implementation. The 2012 is such a session for Governor McDonnell. The General Assembly has been very good to DVS over the past years. This mainly is because the JLC is doing a great job in helping DVS push legislation. This year for the first time, the JLC will be doing so with BVS support.

Commissioner Galanti then reviewed the DVS report (*Attachment 4*). He stated that Benefits

Services is still having a 76% approval rate. That percentage is a little bit better than the rest of the states. The Benefits Services headquarters is located in a temporary building in Roanoke and will be moved back into the same building in Roanoke as the USDVA once it is renovated. Last week Secretary Terrie Suit and Deputy Secretary Jim Hopper visited the Roanoke offices.

The State Approving Agency (SAA), in addition to approving programs around the state, will also be approving Veterans for educational programs. They are currently up to 51,000 Veterans that are receiving the GI Bill. The Student Veterans Association is a National organization. They have a very active chapter at VCU. They have approached DVS to become the first state chapter. They want to help DVS help their fellow Veterans.

The Care Centers operate very smoothly with non-general funds – that is non-Virginia-taxpayer revenue. The Cemeteries are very attractive. The VWWP is a wonderful program as indicated in the attached Commissioner's report.

Commissioner Galanti briefly reviewed the successes of the 2011 General Assembly session included in his report and concluded his remarks.

Unfinished Business

Review BVS and JLC Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations

Chairman Jones stated that every year by August 15 BVS has to submit objectives that are recommended legislative initiatives to the Governor's office via DVS. This year BVS came up with 10 objectives. Four got cut because they did not need legislative or budget support this year. Six were submitted by DVS to the Governor. BVS also works along with JLC and a summary of 2011 Executive Order 29 recommendations for BVS and JLC are at Attachments 5 and 6, respectively.

Chairman Jones reviewed the objectives and sponsors. He stated that last week during the JLC meeting sponsors were assigned to the BVS objectives as follows.

Delivery of Benefit Services will be sponsored by Vietnam Veterans of America.
Education Services Staffing will be sponsored by Association of the United States Army.
Care Centers Staffing will be sponsored by Military Order of Purple Heart.
Hampton Veterans Care Center Pre-Planning Study will be sponsored by Disabled American Veterans.

One of the JLC Administrative Objectives is the Veterans Designation on Virginia Driver's License and asked Ms. Anne Atkins to comment. Ms. Atkins stated that veterans have wanted an indicator on the Virginia Driver's License that indicated their status as a veteran. Because of federal security requirements, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (VDMV) cannot accommodate that proposal. As an alternative, VDMV has offered to create a Veterans ID card. Veterans would use his/her DD214 to show their veteran status. The card will only be useful to prove veterans status. VDMV hopes to have the program ready to issue Veterans ID Cards by Memorial Day 2012. The information will be in the veterans data base at VDMV.

Chairman Jones stated that he was at a luncheon this past weekend that Delegate Joe Morrissey attended. During this luncheon Delegate Morrissey stated that this is one of the initiatives that he would sponsor this year. Ms. Atkins stated that the ID card will not require legislation. This is something that the VDMV Commissioner can do without legislation. With almost over 7,000 realtors offering discounts to veterans, they can use this ID card to obtain discounts. The veteran may apply for the card on-line, by mail or in person.

Chairman Jones stated that the next objective is Unclaimed Cremated Remains of Veterans. DVS has already interned several unclaimed cremated remains. Commissioner Galanti stated that this started last year and they have held two ceremonies. DVS is trying to obtain legislation so that DVS can check with funeral homes that house unclaimed cremated remains.

The last two objectives JLC are Sales and Use Tax Exemption for Veterans Service Organizations and Homeless Veterans. The Governor's office in conjunction with VWWP is pursuing the homeless veterans issue.

Chairman Jones concluded by saying that this year BVS got a slow start developing objectives but should be able to develop them a lot faster next year.

Review status of Virginia Veterans Cemetery Woods Walkway Project

Mr. Don Kaiserman presented an information-only power point presentation on the Virginia Veterans Cemetery Woods Walkway Project. The Amelia Cemetery has a gravel walkway that they want to pave which will make the walkway wheelchair accessible. This same presentation was given to the JLC, however, the intent was different. With the JLC, the intent was to see if VSOs would be willing to contribute their emblems as stone features along the walkway. VSOs may also want to contribute a bench. The stone features run any way from \$3,000 - \$6,000. The Purple Heart has been very responsive to this and has purchased features for cemeteries.

Chairman Jones stated that during the pre-opening of the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center BVS collected some funds that were donated to help out with the framing of Colonel Barfoot and Colonel Sitter portraits. Chairman Jones would like to see the BVS donate benches to the cemeteries. BVS could donate one bench to each cemetery. The benches are around \$1,700. The Board will further discuss this at a later date.

New Business

Review and adopt committee assignments

Chairman Jones discussed the committee assignments (*Attachment 7*). He asked the Board to please review them and asked for comments. No comments were presented.

Chairman Jones made a **motion** to approve the committee assignments, **seconded** by Dr. John A. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Anderson asked that the Board Chairman put out some directives to the committees to guide them in accomplishing their goals and objectives. Chairman Jones said that he would do so.

Review and adopt 2012 meeting schedule

Chairman Jones reviewed the 2012 meeting schedule (*Attachment 8*). The Board members discussed the dates listed.

Monday, January 9, 2012
Wednesday, May 9, 2012
Wednesday, July 18, 2012
Wednesday, November 14, 2012

The discussion centered on the long periods between the January and May meetings and the July and November meetings.

Mr. Hilgers said that the long period between January and May occurs because the Boards do not meet during the General Assembly session from 12 January to mid March. Additionally, Mr. Combs had to contend with working around the JLC, VSF and War Memorial Foundation Board meetings in proposing the dates. Mr. Hilgers suggested approving the January 9, 2012 meeting and table the other three dates until the January meeting.

Chairman Jones said that without objection, the January 9, 2012 meeting would be held and the other three would be tabled. No objection was presented.

Review and adopt 2012 Plan of Action

Chairman Jones reviewed the 2012 Plan of Action (*Attachment 9*) and stated that the Plan would stay the same with some adjustments to the dates. Chairman Jones stated that the January 9 date would be approved with the remaining dates and actions tabled until the January meeting.

Chairman Jones **moved** to approve the 2012 Action Plan with the exception of possible date's changes after January 9, **seconded** by Mr. William Haneke. The motion carried unanimously.

DVS Service Area Information-only Presentations

Benefits

Mr. John Anderson, Benefits Director gave a power point presentation on Benefit Services. Currently there are 20 field officers and two more will be added, one in Alexandria and one in Virginia Beach. Benefits Services has hired a training coordinator. The General Assembly was able to fund the County Service Officer program. Interviews are being held and hope to have the program up and running shortly. This will give DVS the opportunity to work with counties that may have the desire to have a county service officer. He explained the need to increase the benefits staff in areas where the work load has already increased as part of their long range plan. Mr. Anderson concluded by explaining the problems they faced keeping experienced claims officers because the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs pays a lot more.

Education

Ms. Annie Walker, Director of the State Approving Agency (SAA), provided a power point presentation on Education Services. Ms. Walker stated that when veterans returns home they face many closed doors. She said that the one good thing about the GI Bill is that it provides one

open door for veterans. The SAA is the only agency that actually approves educational programs so that veterans and their dependants may receive that educational benefit. Ms. Walker explained the SAA mission. A veteran cannot attend training until SAA approves the institution that provides it. The SAA now has a new mission which is to safe guard the veterans' opportunities against waste, fraud and abuse by a through, comprehensive compliance and audit. Ms. Walker then mentioned that the number of institutions they accredit has grown over 300% in the past few years because of the entry of multiple for-profit schools. She reviewed some issues with for-profit institutions. Ms. Walker concluded with SAA plans for FFY 12 and its long range plans. With the Iraqi departure of US forces, the SAA will see an increase in veterans seeking education benefits.

Care Centers

Ms. Sandra Ranicki, Administrator for SBVCC, gave a power point presentation on Care Centers. She stated that there are two care centers in Virginia. Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center is located in Richmond and Virginia Veterans Care Center is located in Roanoke.

Some of the services that are provided at both facilities are a full therapy department; all of the primary care physicians come to the care centers; and an in-house pharmacy with a pharmacist on staff. Ms. Ranicki explained that they do not receive any Virginia tax payer general funds. Their funding comes from Medicare, Medicaid, Federal VA, Private Insurance, and private funds.

Ms. Ranicki explained that SBVCC has a very close relationship with McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center as does the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke with the Veterans Affairs medical center collocated there. About 30% of SBVCC admissions come from McGuire. SBVCC also admits patients from 19 different health care facilities including facilities in Northern Virginia and the Tidewater area. The current age range is from 45 to 99. The youngest resident to stay at SBVCC was a 29 year old sergeant for rehab following some serious injuries and he was able to return to active duty.

There are several inspections and certifications that the care centers have to keep current. At least three annual inspections by other agencies are held. All of these inspections are unannounced. The Virginia Department of Health Office of Licenses and Certifications does at least one annual inspection. They cover the Virginia State Regulations and Federal CMS Regulations. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs does at least one annual inspection. The Virginia Department of Social Services issues licenses for Assisted Living. The State Fire Marshall does an inspection once a year.

Ms. Ranicki then reviewed their plans for fiscal year 2012 and the Long-Range Plans for 2013 and beyond. She also reviewed EO 29 and roles for BVS in 2012. She invited everyone to visit both care centers.

Commissioner Galanti asked Ms. Ranicki if she could review the Governor's visit to SBVCC for the Board. Ms. Ranicki stated that they were very fortunate to have the Governor and First Lady visit SBVCC on D-Day. She said the Governor's office called to see if SBVCC had any WWII veterans and Ms. Ranicki informed them that they have 88 WWII veterans. The Governor was

scheduled to be there for only one hour and ended up staying for over two hours.

Public comment

No members of the public were present.

Vice-Chairman Haneke commented on the great job everyone has done.

Mr. George Melnyk asked if the staff members could be added to the Roster List (*Attachment 10*). Chairman Jones said they would be added and mentioned that a copy of the Bylaws also is available (*Attachment 11*).

Dr. Anderson commented on this month's edition of *Time* magazine. He explained that there is an article on the disconnect between the military and civilians. He suggests that everyone should read the article.

Prepare for Next Meeting

Chairman Jones said the next meeting would be on Monday January 9, 2012.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
Board of Veterans Services
American Legion Building
1708 Commonwealth Avenue
Richmond
November 16, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Opening, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call and Introduction of Members, Quorum Determination, Approval of Agenda, and Introduction of DVS Staff and Guests – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Approval of August 10, 2011 Meeting Minutes – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:05 – 10:10)
- III. Reports (10:10 – 10:25)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (5 minutes)
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *David Holt, VSF Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - c. Department of Veterans Services – *Paul Galanti, Commissioner* (5 minutes)
- IV. Unfinished Business (10:25 – 10:45)
 - a. Review BVS and JLC Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10 minutes)
 - b. Review status of Virginia Veterans Cemetery Woods Walkway Project – *Don Kaiserman, BVS member* (10 minutes)
- Break (10:45 – 10:55)
- V. New Business (10:55 – 11:50)
 - a. Review and adopt committee assignments – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - b. Review and adopt 2012 meeting schedule – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - c. Review and adopt 2012 Plan of Action – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - d. DVS Service Area Presentations (10 minutes per presentation)
 - i. Benefits – *John Anderson, Director*
 - ii. Education – *Annie Walker, Director*
 - iii. Care Centers – *Sandra Ranicki, Administrator, Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center*
- VI. Public comment (11:40 – 11:50)
- VII. Prepare for Next Meeting – *Thad Jones, Chairman* (11:50 – 12:00)
- VIII. Adjourn (12:00)

ATTACHMENT 2

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS REPORT TO BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES November 16, 2011

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) met November 9. At the meeting the JLC:

1. Received presentations on the Virginia Veterans Care Center and on the Woods Walkway Projects at state veteran's cemeteries.
2. Received reports from:
 - a. The Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services;
 - b. A representative of the Veterans Services Foundation;
 - c. The Commissioner of Veterans Services;
 - d. The Special Projects Coordinator of the of Virginia Wounded Warrior Program and the Director of the Virginia Veterans Corps;
 - e. The JLC representative to the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC); and
 - f. The Executive Director of the Virginia War Memorial.
3. Reviewed the status of the JLC's 2011-2012 Initiatives (the JLC's 2011 Executive Order 29 – EO29 – recommendations to the Governor).
4. Voted to endorse and support the EO29 recommendations submitted by the Board of Veterans Services. A JLC sponsor was assigned to Recommendations 1-4 to help advance the Board's recommendations.
5. Adopted changes to the JLC Constitution and By-Laws.
6. Reviewed procedures related to working with the Executive and Legislative Branches of state government.
7. Reviewed the Appointed Officers for 2011-2012, as nominated by the Chair. The Appointed Officers will be approved at the next meeting.
8. Reviewed the proposed 2012 meeting schedule, which will be adopted at the next meeting.
9. Reviewed, and tabled, a request involving the Veterans Remembered Flag.

The next JLC meeting is scheduled for December 20.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny M. Holbert
Chair

ATTACHMENT 3
VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION
REPORT TO
Board of Veterans Services
November 16, 2011

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees met on November 2, 2011. A quorum was present. The following actions were taken:

- (1) Received Board of Veterans Services Chairman's, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Chair's, the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Commissioner's, VSF Committee; VWWP Regional Directors, and Cemeteries Projects Reports;
- (2) Reviewed Foundation fundraising conducted during FY12;
- (3) Approved VSF FY12 1st Quarter Financial Report;
- (4) Reviewed FY12 Goals and Objectives;
- (5) Approved updated VSD-DVS Joint Policy #7;
- (6) Discussed proposals for a VSF Logo;

The Finance and Development Committees met before the full board meeting. The minutes of the Committee meetings and the board for November 2 meetings will be posted by November 16.

As of November 11, 2011, the Foundation has raised \$80,000 of which \$72,500 is for VWWP. That does not count about \$20,000 in pledges that have been received and should be collected by the end of 2011.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for sometime in March 2012 after the General Assembly adjourns. Its location is to be determined. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) approve the 2nd Quarter FY11 Fund Statement; (2) review VSF FY12 fundraising program; (3) consider recommendations for a VSF logo; and (4) approve and budget adjustments proposed. There will be Finance and Development Committee meetings before the next Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

David Holt
VSF Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES REPORT TO BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES November 16, 2011

Overview of Fiscal Year 2011(FY11) operations

- **Benefit Services:** *assists Virginia's veterans and their dependents in obtaining benefits to which they are entitled under federal, state, and local laws*
 - 28,541 claims submitted to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) on behalf of Virginia's veterans
 - 15,962 claims adjudicated by USDVA
 - 12,063 claims granted – 76% approval rate
 - 135,721 client contacts
 - \$1.68 billion in USDVA compensation and disability payments to Virginia veterans and dependents in Federal Fiscal Year 2010 (FFY10)
- **State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training:** *the only organization in Virginia that approves educational programs so veterans and their dependents may receive their educational benefits*
 - Post GI Bill covers tuition and fees plus allowances for housing, books and supplies
 - In FFY10, Virginia ranked 5th in terms of veterans taking advantage of GI Bill benefits
 - In FFY10, the GI Bill brought \$400 million into Virginia
 - More than 990 instructional institutions in Virginia are approved to provide training to veterans and dependents
 - 292% growth from 2007-2011 in the number of Virginia veterans and dependents using GI Bill benefit
- **Virginia Veterans Care Centers:** *provide long-term care and short-term rehabilitation to Virginia's veterans*
 - Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center
 - Adjacent to McGuire VAMC
 - 160 beds in private rooms
 - Skilled nursing care, secure Alzheimer's/dementia unit
 - Virginia Veterans Care Center
 - Adjacent to Salem VAMC
 - 240 beds
 - Skilled nursing care, domiciliary care, secure Alzheimer's/Dementia unit
 - Care center nursing units provided 117,925 patient days of care in FY11, operating at 95% capacity

- **Virginia Veterans Cemeteries:** *Virginia's veterans cemeteries are shrines commemorating the personal sacrifice of those who served and those who stand ready to defend our freedom*
 - In FY11, the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery and the Virginia Veterans Cemetery conducted 1,091 interments.
 - The Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery was dedicated on May 6, 2011 and conducted 23 interments in FY11
- **Virginia Wounded Warrior Program:** *provides behavioral health, rehabilitation services, and support to veterans, National Guard members, reservists, and their family members*
 - 3,617 veterans and their families served by Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) in FY11
 - 615 community events attended by VWWP staff
 - 20,000 Virginians reached at events
 - 6,550 military personnel and families reached at VWWP briefings
 - VWWP built in just three years
 - Extraordinary interagency collaboration
 - Grants aggressively augment state funding:
 - Education for mental health community
 - Conferences
 - Education for criminal justice community
 - AmeriCorps pilot expanding outreach in Greater Hampton Roads

Update on select budget and legislation passed by the Governor and 2011 General Assembly:

- **House Bill 1557 (Cox, M.K.) // Senate Bill 1399 (Locke):** Clarifies that the number of employees assigned to the processing of benefit claims shall be sufficient to maintain a ratio of one staff person for every 26,212 veterans residing in the Commonwealth.
 - Supported recommendation made by the JLC to improve services to Virginia veterans by restoring staffing for the DVS Benefits Services Program
 - DVS budget increased by \$402,400 to fill seven vacant (previously unfunded) positions and open two field offices
 - Claims agents: four positions have been filled:
 - Alexandria
 - Norfolk
 - Staunton
 - Virginia Beach
 - Administrative support:
 - Employee hired to fill position in Virginia Beach office – will start in December
 - Currently holding interviews for position in the Alexandria office

- Training manager: started November 10
- Reopened the Alexandria field office in October
- New office in Virginia Beach will open in December
- **Budget Amendment:**
 - JLC recommended that the DVS budget be increased by \$387,100 to Ensure that state veterans cemeteries operate in a safe, efficient manner and meet national shrine standards by filling vacant positions, replacing worn out equipment, and purchasing necessary supplies
 - \$387,100 included in Governor McDonnell's budget and approved by the General Assembly. Money was appropriated as follows:
 - \$101,500 to fill three positions that were previously unfunded
 - Two positions have been filled – one each at the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries
 - The third position (at the Suffolk cemetery) will be filled in the next two weeks
 - \$85,000 and one additional position to make up the operating and position shortfall at the Dublin cemetery
 - Four of five positions filled
 - Fifth position should be filled within two weeks
 - \$60,000 to replace worn out equipment at Amelia cemetery
 - Dump truck (\$39,000) purchased
 - Two zero-turn mowers (\$9,000 each) purchased
 - Remaining funds will be used to purchase smaller items
 - \$20,000 to replace worn out equipment at Suffolk cemetery
 - Three zero-turn mowers (\$9,000 each) purchased
 - \$71,000 for road signs for Amelia, Dublin, and Suffolk cemeteries
 - VDOT contractor currently surveying locations for signs
 - Installation to begin ASAP
 - \$16,000 for grass seed/fertilizer
 - Approximately \$5,000 spent at Amelia to date
 - Approximately \$5,000 spent at Suffolk to date
 - \$33,600 for weekend/holiday staffing
 - Implemented weekend staffing in July. Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries staffed on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - No weekend staffing at Dublin cemetery yet because of limited number of gravesites
 - All cemeteries staffed 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. on most holidays
- **HB1691 (Stolle/Bulova) and SB1063 (Miller, J.C.):** Provides for the program established by the Department of Veterans Services to monitor and coordinate mental health and rehabilitative services support for Virginia veterans to cooperate with localities that may establish special treatment procedures for veterans and active military servicemembers in the criminal justice system. The bill further provides that to facilitate local involvement and flexibility in responding to the problem of crime in local communities and to effectively treat, counsel, rehabilitate, and supervise veterans and

active military servicemembers who are offenders or defendants in the criminal justice system that any city, county, or combination thereof may develop, establish, and maintain policies, procedures, and treatment services for all such offenders who are convicted and sentenced for misdemeanors or felonies that are not felony acts of violence.

- Supported recommendation made by the JLC.
 - Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) to work with localities, upon request, that establish special procedures.
- **HB1861 (Anderson/Stolle) and SB824 (Edwards/McWaters/Barker)**: Authorizes certain veterans who elect to establish Virginia as their permanent residence for domiciliary purposes to establish immediate residency in Virginia and become eligible for in-state tuition, rather than waiting the required one-year period. This bill is identical to SB 824.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul E. Galanti
Commissioner

ATTACHMENT 5

Summary of 2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendations Board of Veterans Services

1. Delivery of Benefit Services: Improve the delivery of benefit services to Virginia veterans by (i) changing the ratio of Department of Veterans Services (DVS) claims agents to veterans to one claims agent for every 23,000 veterans; and (ii) providing an additional four GF positions and \$350,000 (GF) to meet the new Code requirement and address other shortfalls.
2. Education Services Staffing: Ensure that the Education Services Section of the Department of Veterans Services has the necessary resources to meet its new mission under the Post 9/11 GI Bill Improvement Act by providing two additional NGF positions.
3. Care Center Staffing: Ensure that state veterans care centers have the resources to deliver quality care to residents by providing an additional 51 NGF positions and \$2,700,000 additional NGF appropriation in FY13, to reflect the opening of the 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center.
4. Hampton Veterans Care Center Pre-Planning Study: Ensure that a viable and appropriate site is selected for the construction of the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center by re-appropriating up to \$300,000 (GF) from FY11 to FY12 for a pre-planning study.
5. Voting Status of *Ex Officio* Members of the Board of Veterans Services: Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by granting voting privileges to all *ex officio* members.
6. Additional Citizen Board Members: Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by increasing the number of citizen board members from 11 to 15.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #1
Delivery of Benefit Services

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Improve the delivery of benefit services to Virginia Veterans by (i) recommending a change to the Code-mandated ratio of claims agents to Veterans; (ii) identifying the resources needed to meet the new Code requirements; (iii) proposing how the additional claims agents would be used; and (iv) identifying other shortfalls in benefit services delivery.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - Veterans are entitled to disability compensation from the federal government for injuries or illnesses resulting from military service. To obtain this compensation, Veterans must file claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA).
 - Filing a claim is a long, complex process – most Veterans seek assistance to file a claim.
 - To assist Virginia Veterans, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) operates 20 Benefits Field Offices that provide free assistance to Virginia Veterans in developing and filing claims for compensation and pension benefits with the USDVA.
 - §2.2-2002.1 of the Code of Virginia sets a ratio of one DVS claims agent for every 26,212 veterans residing in the Commonwealth.
 - There were 823,000 Virginia Veterans as of September 30, 2010.
 - The number of claims filed by DVS on behalf of Virginia Veterans continues to grow, and DVS claims agents are struggling to keep up with this growing demand.
 - In FY05, DVS filed 18,550 claims;
 - In FY10, that number grew to 26,431 – a 42% increase.
 - Virginia receives a considerable return on investment for helping Virginia Veterans. In FY10, DVS filed 26,431 claims on behalf of Virginia Veterans, resulting in an estimated \$122 million in new disability compensation payments.
 - Veterans whose claims are approved by the USDVA are assigned a service-connected disability rating. In addition to monthly payments, it enables access USDVA health care.
 - DVS Benefit Field Offices are staffed by claims agents, who provide direct, one-on-one assistance to veterans in developing and filing claims with the USDVA.
 - DVS does not have the financial resources to add additional staff to meet rising demand.
 - Most DVS offices are “one-deep” – only one claims agent is assigned.
 - When the claims agent is on vacation or is sick, the office is effectively closed. The closest DVS claims agent may be in an office 50 miles away.
 - Employees in their first year of State service can take up to 26 days of vacation and sick leave a year. This means that a benefit field office with only one claims agent assigned could be closed as much as 10.5% of the time.
 - This increases to 12% of the time for a claims agent with five years of experience, and 14% for a claims agent who has been with the Commonwealth for 10 years.

3. **DISCUSSION:**

- The solution is to change the Code-mandated ratio of claims agents to Veterans from 1:26,212 to 1:23,000 and to provide the resources to fill the additional positions required.
 - The new ratio would require DVS to hire four additional claims agents, at an estimated cost of \$275,000 per year.
- The four additional claims agents will help DVS improve services to Virginia Veterans and increase the number of claims filed by:
 - Ensuring that the “one-deep” offices remain open for service when the assigned claims agent is sick or on vacation;
 - Increasing outreach to homeless and incarcerated veterans;
 - Expanding outreach to Veterans Service Organizations;
 - Providing services at itinerant service locations; and
 - Offering expanded service hours such as on nights or weekends.
- Three of the new claims agents should be assigned as “floater” claims agents to assist a group of three to four benefit field offices that are geographically clustered:
 - One “floater” claims agent to assist the Alexandria, Fairfax, and Quantico offices;
 - One “floater” to assist the Big Stone Gap, Bristol, Cedar Bluff, and Wytheville offices; and
 - One “floater” to assist the Charlottesville, Front Royal, and Staunton offices.
- The fourth new claims agent should be assigned to the Danville field office, which is shorthanded because of the increase in workload following a relocation to a new office adjacent to the Danville USDVA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) and expanded itinerant services to veterans in the Martinsville area.
 - The new claims agent in Danville would also provide backup to the Lynchburg, Roanoke, and South Hill offices.
- A final area of concern is that DVS lacks the financial resources to adjust salaries to provide for internal realignment, incentive pay, or location differential pay; or to meet rising rent and utility costs. An additional \$75,000 per year is recommended to begin to correct these problems.
- DVS is working to develop an improved claims filing system called TurboVet that DVS believes will increase the productivity of individual claims agents and ensure accuracy and completeness of claims filed. However, TurboVet is not a replacement for trained claims agents, nor will it help to provide services when one-deep offices are closed.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That the Governor (i) propose legislation changing the ratio of DVS claims agents to Veterans to one claims agent for every 23,000 Veterans; and (ii) provide an additional four positions and \$350,000.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #2
Education Services Staffing

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Ensure that the State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) has the necessary position authorization to meet its new mission under the Post 9/11 GI Bill Improvement Act.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The Virginia SAA is responsible for approving courses of instruction at post-secondary educational institutions, so that eligible veterans, war orphans and widows may enroll in and receive financial assistance from the USDVA while pursuing an approved course or program.
 - At present, 994 institutions are approved; 426 are active (i.e. have a Veteran enrolled for FFY12 – October 2011-September 2012).
 - Over 42,000 Veterans and eligible dependents were enrolled in Virginia institutions in FFY10.
 - The Virginia SAA operates under a contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), is authorized seven (7) positions, and is funded by federal (non-general) funds.
 - Beginning October 1, 2011, the Virginia SAA will also be required, under the federal contract, to perform compliance surveys under the Post 9/11 GI Bill Improvement Act.
 - This will involve conducting audits of Veterans educational and financial aid records at all active institutions in Virginia (i.e. the 426 schools with a Veteran enrolled for FFY12).
 - Compliance Surveys are conducted at schools and establishments to verify enrollment data, award actions and previous payments for accuracy and to ensure that payments made to eligible Veterans are in keeping with USDVA regulations.
 - The new mission will also help SAA monitor the graduation and employment rates of Veterans.
5. **DISCUSSION:**
 - SAA estimates that it will take two to three hours to audit a Veterans record. Even if only 10% of the records are audited, the time required exceeds the current capacity by a wide mark.
 - SAA cannot complete its new mission without additional manpower.
 - Two additional positions are required to ensure the Virginia SAA has the human resources necessary to meet its mission of ensuring access to higher education opportunities for Virginia Veterans and eligible dependents.
 - The estimated cost is \$70,000 per position. This includes salary, benefits, travel, etc.
 - SAA is federally funded, so there will be no fiscal impact to the Commonwealth. The SAA will either receive increased funding from the USDVA to pay for the new positions, or will reprogram funding currently used for education outreach.
6. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That the Governor's budget include two additional positions for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #3
Care Center Staffing

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Ensure that state veterans care centers have the required personnel and financial resources to delivery quality care to residents.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - DVS operates two veterans care centers – in Richmond and Roanoke.
 - The 240-bed Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) in Roanoke has 260 authorized full-time positions. The VVCC includes 120 skilled-care beds, 60 beds in the Alzheimer's/Dementia unit, and 60 assisted-living beds.
 - The 160-bed Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) in Richmond has 233 authorized full-time positions. The SBVCC includes 120 skilled-care beds and 40 beds in the Alzheimer's/Dementia unit.
 - A 40-bed addition (skilled care beds) is planned for the SBVCC. Design work will commence this fall. Construction will likely begin in summer 2012 and be completed in March 2013.
 - Staffing ratios per resident are higher for skilled care beds than for assisted living beds, which accounts for the higher staffing ratios at the SBVCC than at the VVCC.
7. **DISCUSSION:**
 - The VVCC and SBVCC both have adequate staffing and spending authority to meet current (FY12) service levels.
 - SBVCC will require additional staff and appropriation (spending authority) in late FY13 and ongoing for the 40-bed addition.
 - 51 additional full-time positions will be needed.
 - \$2,700,000 in additional appropriation (spending authority) will be required.
8. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor's budget proposal include an authorization for 51 additional positions and \$2,700,000 additional appropriation in FY13 for the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center addition.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #4
Hampton Veterans Care Center Pre-Planning Study

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Ensure that a viable and appropriate site is selected for the construction of the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center.

2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - DVS operates two veterans care centers – the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) in Roanoke and the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) in Richmond.
 - A 40-bed addition is planned for the SBVCC. Design work will commence this fall. Construction will likely begin in summer 2012 and be completed in March 2013.
 - The Governor, through the Department of Veterans Services (DVS), was authorized and has applied for grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) to construct new care centers of up to 240 beds each in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia.
 - DVS has requested \$52 million from the USDVA for each project. This amount would be matched by \$28 million in state funds for each project.
 - Virginia is on the USDVA grant funding priority list and could receive funding for the Hampton care center as early as FFY12.
 - A potential site for the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center has been identified on the grounds of the Hampton VA Medical Center (Hampton VAMC).
 - DVS has also been advised that a site may be available on Fort Monroe, after it is turned over to the Commonwealth.
 - Pre-planning studies are used to evaluate such factors as site access; electrical, water, and other utility capacity; ability of the local soil/bedrock to support the building's foundation; vertical/horizontal scale of the building; etc.
 - The Department of General Services, on behalf of DVS, has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for architecture and engineering (A&E) services for the SBVCC addition. As part of the RFP, firms were also requested to provide bids to conduct a pre-planning study for the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center.

9. **DISCUSSION:**
 - A pre-planning study is required before the Commonwealth takes possession of either the Hampton VAMC or the Fort Monroe site.
 - The pre-planning study will determine the relative feasibility of either site to serve as the future home of the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center.
 - The study should be initiated as soon as possible in order to position the Commonwealth for receipt of the federal grant funds and move the project forward expeditiously.

10. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor re-appropriate up to \$300,000 for DVS to use in FY12 for a pre-planning for the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #5
Voting Status of *Ex Officio* Members of the Board of Veterans Services

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by granting voting privileges to all *ex officio* members.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - BVS was established in 2003 as a policy board in the executive branch of state government. The Board consists of:
 - 11 citizen members, appointed by the Governor;
 - 5 legislative members; and
 - 3 *ex officio* members.
 - The Commissioner of Veterans Services serves *ex officio* with full voting privileges.
 - The Chairmen of the Board of Trustees of the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) and of the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) of Veterans Service Organizations serve *ex officio* without voting privileges.
 - Under §2.2-2452, a majority of the Board members constitutes a quorum. Under current law, the BVS must actually have two quorums to conduct business – a quorum of all members, and a quorum of voting members.
11. **DISCUSSION:**
 - The BVS works closely with the VSF and JLC to support the delivery of veterans services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
 - For example, the JLC might advance an issue to the BVS for study. After study, the BVS could return the issue to the JLC, pass it to the Commissioner for action, or advise that the VSF seek donated or other funding for the issue.
 - Because of the close interaction between the three boards and the critical linking role played by the BVS, the JLC and VSF should be fully represented on the BVS.
 - In situations like the BVS, Roberts Rules of Order recommends full participation by all board members, including *ex officio* members.
 - Granting voting privileges to all *ex officio* members is cost neutral, as these members already attend BVS meetings.
12. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That voting status be granted to all *ex officio* members of the Board of Veterans Services.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #6
Additional Citizen Board Members

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by increasing the number of citizen board members from 11 to 15.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - BVS was established in 2003 as a policy board in the executive branch of state government. The Board consists of:
 - 11 citizen members, appointed by the Governor;
 - 3 *ex officio* members; and
 - 5 legislative members.
 - The Code specifies that: *In making appointments, the Governor shall endeavor to...[select] appointees of such qualifications and experience as will allow them to provide expertise and insight into:*
 1. *Best practices in benefits claims services, medical and health care management, or cemetery operations;*
 2. *Performance measurements and general management principles; and*
 3. *Nonprofit volunteer operations and management.*
 - The Board has three standing committees (Benefits, Care Centers, and Cemeteries). The Board also establishes *ad hoc* committees as required (e.g., Bylaws, Nominating, etc.).
 - The number of Virginia Veterans has increased by 40,000 in the 10 years; the services provided by the Commonwealth have expanded to meet their new or expanded needs.
 - In the past decade, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services has opened five new benefit field offices, two veterans cemeteries, and a veterans care center, and has established the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.
13. **DISCUSSION:**
 - The *ex officio* and legislative members bring unique and irreplaceable skills and experience to the Board. However, because of the demands on their time (service on other boards, legislative duties, etc.) they are unavailable to serve on committees.
 - Considerable demands are also placed on the Board Chairman and Vice Chairman (providing leadership and direction, representing BVS on other boards, etc.), meaning that these two citizen members are also unavailable to participate in committee work.
 - This leaves only 9 citizen members to do the “heavy lifting” on the committees.
 - Increasing the number of citizen members from 11 to 15 will provide the Board with additional expertise and capacity to meet Code-mandated requirements and will improve committee operations, enabling the Board to better serve Virginia’s veterans and support the Governor’s goal of making Virginia the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.
 - The increase in members will result in a small increase in mileage reimbursement.
14. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That the number of citizen members on the Board of Veterans Services be increased from 11 to 15.

ATTACHMENT 6

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations 2011-2012 JLC Initiatives

Legislative Objectives

Unclaimed Cremated Remains of Veterans: Facilitate the honorable burial of the unclaimed cremated remains (cremains) of Virginia veterans in a state veterans cemetery by requiring funeral homes to provide the names of unclaimed cremains to the Department of Veterans Services (DVS). DVS can screen the names to identify those belonging to a veteran and determine if he/she is eligible for burial in a state veterans cemetery.

Sales and Use Tax Exemption for Veterans Service Organizations: Recognize the community service and philanthropic contributions of Virginia's Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) by establishing an exemption for VSOs from state and local Sales or Use Taxes.

Budget Objectives

Homeless Veterans: Reduce and prevent veterans homelessness in Virginia by implementing as many strategies identified in the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) 2010 study as state fiscal resources will allow.

Administrative Objectives

Veterans Designation on Virginia Driver's License: Provide a simple, ready means of identification of veterans status for Virginia's veterans by adding a veterans indicator to the Virginia Driver's License/ID Card.

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #1
Veterans Designation on Virginia Driver's License

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To provide a simple, ready means of identification for Virginia's veterans.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - Retired service personnel, including those that are medically retired, receive a United States Uniformed Services Identification Card (DD Form 2 (Retired)).
 - All other veterans who have served in the active military, naval, or air service and who have been released there from under conditions other than dishonorable receive a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) as evidence of their service and a Discharge Certificate. Neither of these documents are suitable substitutes for an identification card.
 - Veterans who receive medical care through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs receive a veterans identification card. However, only 15% of Virginia's veterans qualify for USDVA medical care.
3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Those veterans who wish to prove veterans status, but who lack government-issued identification (ID) cards, are obligated to produce their DD 214 or other discharge papers, which are not documents that conveniently can be carried on a daily basis.
 - A method of honoring Virginia's veterans and providing them with a convenient ID would be to add their veterans service status to their Virginia Drivers License or to their state-issued ID if the veteran so requests. Other states have implemented this feature, most recently North Carolina and Utah.
 - Each time a Virginia veteran uses a driver's license or state ID, the veteran's honorable service to Virginia and the Nation would be easily and immediately recognized.
 - A veterans indicator on a driver's license or state ID would help qualify for commercial discounts (restaurants and other stores) or other cost saving features (such as free access to Virginia's parks or reduced fishing license fees).
 - Having a veterans identifier on state driver's licenses could help law enforcement when officers come across a veteran in a tense situation where the veteran may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other emotional battle scars. The knowledge can be used by law enforcement to decrease the volatility of a potentially dangerous situation.
 - Adding a veterans service designation to the Virginia Driver's License would be a way of giving veterans a recognizable distinction whenever their state ID is used and would be further proof that Virginia is the most veterans friendly state in the Nation.
 - Veterans requesting the designation would need to show their DD-214 as evidence of their service and their discharge. Active Duty, Retired, or members of the National Guard or Reserve would present their current military ID.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** The JLC recommends that the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation that would authorize a veterans designator on Virginia Drivers Licenses and ID cards.

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #2
Unclaimed Cremated Remains of Veterans

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Facilitate the honorable burial of the unclaimed cremated remains (cremains) of Virginia Veterans in a state veterans cemetery.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The cremains of Veterans sometimes go unclaimed by family from funeral homes. When this happens, the cremains may sit on shelves in funeral homes for years or even decades.
 - The Code of Virginia allows funeral homes to dispose of unclaimed cremains after 90 days, but many funeral homes retain unclaimed cremains in storage for extended periods.
 - The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) operates state veterans cemeteries in Amelia, Dublin, and Suffolk that provide honorable burials to qualified veterans.
 - If a set of unclaimed cremains can be positively identified as belonging to a veteran, and if that veteran is eligible for burial in a veterans cemetery, then DVS can provide that veteran with a dignified burial and an honorable final resting place among his/her comrades in arms.
 - While the Code of Virginia allows funeral homes to dispose of unclaimed cremains, it does not require the funeral homes to provide the names of the unclaimed cremains to DVS for determination of veterans status.
 - In an effort to encourage funeral homes to provide the names of unclaimed cremains, DVS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2009 with the Virginia Funeral Directors Association (VFDA) – one of the four funeral director associations in Virginia.
 - The other three funeral directors associations did not wish to sign an MOU with DVS.
 - Though the MOU with the VFDA has been in effect for two years, few names have been provided by funeral homes to DVS for determination of veterans status and eligibility.
 - DVS staff members have made a considerable effort to request the names of unclaimed cremains from funeral directors, but have met with limited success, as have the efforts of the non-profit Missing in America Project (MIAP) in Virginia.
3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Veterans who served our Nation honorable deserve an honorable final resting place among their comrades in arms, not to end up unclaimed and forgotten on the back shelf of a closet in a funeral home.
 - If provided the names of unclaimed cremains, DVS can work with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to identify those belonging to Veterans, and can determine if they are eligible for burial in a state veterans cemetery.
 - The Code of Virginia gives funeral directors the authority to transfer the unclaimed cremains of Veterans to DVS for honorable burial.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor propose legislation requiring funeral homes to provide the names of unclaimed cremains to the Department of Veterans Services, in order to facilitate the honorable burial of unclaimed cremains of Virginia Veterans in a state veterans cemetery.

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #3
Sales and Use Tax Exemption for Veterans Service Organizations

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To recognize the community service and philanthropic contributions of Virginia's Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) by establishing an exemption for VSOs from state and local Sales or Use Taxes.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - The IRS has recognized VSOs as exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (19) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - The Code of Virginia 58.1-609.11. Exemptions for nonprofit entities provides an exemption for sales or use taxes for entities exempt from federal income taxation under 501 (c) (3) or 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - VSOs classified as 501 (c) (19) perform essentially the same functions as those classified as 501 (c) (3) or 501 (c) (4).
 - For example, the VFW Congressional Charter establishes "charitable" as one of the purposes of the organization
 - In 2010, the VFW Department of Virginia and Auxiliaries reported the expenditure of \$1,852,292 and a donation of 339,052 volunteer hours in support of numerous community activities for the citizens of the Commonwealth
 - The VFW volunteer hours cited are valued at \$8,926,533, making the total value of contributions approximately \$11.0 million annually
 - Similarly, in 2009, the American Legion reported the expenditure of \$3,193,679 and a donation of 452,411 volunteer hours in support of community service
 - Other smaller VSOs also contribute dollars and hours in support of community service
3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - Given the level of community service performed by VSOs as expressed in dollars and hours, VSOs should be accorded the same sales and use tax exemption as 501 (c) (3)s and 501 (c) (4)s
 - An exemption would free sales and use tax dollars spent on maintenance, cleaning, and office supplies for additional community service expenditures.
 - VSOs that provide food/beverage service in conjunction with Bingo operations would no longer be double taxed.
 - Currently VSOs pay sales tax on purchase of supplies and sales tax on gross proceeds.
 - The neighboring states of Maryland, West Virginia, and North Carolina provide sales and use tax exemption for VSOs.
 - Providing sales and use tax exemption to VSOs will continue Virginia's move toward making Virginia "the most veteran-friendly state in the nation."
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly establish a sales and use tax exemption in the Code of Virginia for VSOs.

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
2011 Executive Order 29 Recommendation #4
Reducing Veterans Homelessness in Virginia

WHEREAS, homelessness has been a long-term issue and now is a growing problem within the population of veterans in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, trends reported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans advocacy groups, and social services agencies show that there has been a significant increase in the number of women veterans among the homeless; and

WHEREAS, trends reported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans advocacy groups, and social services agencies show that veterans of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan are becoming homeless at a faster rate than did veterans of previous conflicts; and

WHEREAS, the goal of reducing homelessness among Virginia's veterans may be a long term program; and

WHEREAS, action must be taken to start the process of reducing homelessness and the veterans homeless population provides a strong starting point because of the discipline they share, because they are readily identifiable, and because of the benefits they may incur by participating; and

WHEREAS, homeless veteran "stand downs" have been proven to be a successful method of attracting homeless veterans and providing them with access to veterans and employment services; and

WHEREAS, Governor McDonnell's Executive Order Number 29 seeks to address veterans homelessness in conjunction with Executive Order Number 10; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) documented the estimated size and nature of the problem and provided eighteen potential strategies to reduce and prevent veterans homelessness; therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations, That the Governor take another step toward making Virginia the nation's most veteran-friendly state by implementing as many strategies identified by JLARC as state fiscal resources will allow.

ATTACHMENT 7

Looking & Moving Forward Committees Assignments

Benefits Committee

- Bill Haneke, Chairman
- Kate Kohler
- Sandra Love
- William Nicholas

Care Centers Committee

- John Anderson, Chairman
- Peyton Robertson
- Don Lecky

Cemeteries Committee

- George Melnyk, Chairman
- Don Kaiserman
- Al Sample

Board Members at Large

- Thad Jones, BVS Chairman
- Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair
- Dave Holt, VSF Chair
- Paul Galanti, DVS Commissioner
- Rich Anderson, House of Delegates
- Mayme BaCote, House of Delegates
- Chris Stolle, House of Delegates
- John Edwards, Senate of Virginia
- Toddy Puller, Senate of Virginia

Proposed for adoption: November 16, 2011

ATTACHMENT 8

Board of Veterans Services Proposed Meetings – 2012

The following meeting dates are proposed for 2012. All meetings shall start at 10:00 a.m. sharp. Meetings will be held in Richmond because it is the least inconvenient for all Board members. The meeting venue will be announced at least a week ahead of the meeting.

- Monday, January 9, 2012
- Wednesday, May 9, 2012
- Wednesday, July 18, 2012
- Wednesday, November 14, 2011

Thad A. Jones
Chairman
Board of Veterans Services

ATTACHMENT 9

Board of Veterans Services 2012 Action Plan – “Building Upon Our Success”

January 9 meeting

- DVS Operations Briefings: Cemeteries and Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.
- Discuss 2012 General Assembly session, including Governor McDonnell’s proposed budget, DVS Agency Legislation, and other veterans legislation.
- Review Executive Order 29 (EO29) *Serving Virginia’s Veterans* and the role of the BVS
- Administrative matters, as required.

January – May: “*Research and development*”

- Committees hold meetings to review/discuss potential EO29 proposals.
- BVS members research initial EO29 proposals and prepare background papers for presentation at May 9 meeting.

May 9 meeting

- Review 2012 General Assembly Session: budget and legislation.
- Review and discuss initial EO29 proposals.
- Select a nominating committee for July 2012 election of officers.

May – July: “*Putting Meat on the Bones*”

- BVS members continue research on EO29 proposals and prepare background papers for presentation at July 18 meeting.
- Candidates for BVS Chairman or Vice-Chairman submit resumes to nominating committee.

July 18 meeting

- Review, discuss, and approve BVS 2012 EO29 recommendations.
- Review, discuss, and adopt JLC 2012 EO29 recommendations.
- Elect BVS Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

NLT August 15

- Submit BVS 2012 EO29 recommendations to DVS.

November 16 meeting

- Adopt 2013 Meeting Schedule.
- Adopt 2013 Action Plan.
- DVS Operations Briefings: Benefits, Care Centers, and Education.
- Review DVS Strategic Plan.

ATTACHMENT 10

Board of Veterans Services

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[v](#)

ATTACHMENT 11

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES BY-LAWS

Article 1 – Authority and Statement of Purpose

1. Authority: The authority for the Board of Veterans Services is found in § 2.2-2452 of the Code of Virginia (the Code).
2. Statement of Purpose: The Board of Veterans Services (the Board) is a policy board within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government. The Board is responsible for monitoring the welfare of Virginia veterans and setting policies to enhance veteran services across the Commonwealth.

Article II – Membership

1. Composition and Appointment of Members: The Board consists of 19 members, including five legislative members, eleven non-legislative citizen members and three *ex officio* members. Members from the Senate are appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. Members from the House of Delegates are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. Non-legislative members are appointed by the Governor. The Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) (with full voting privileges), the Chairperson of the Veterans Services Foundation (with no voting privileges) and the Chairperson of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (with no voting privileges) are *ex officio* members.
2. Terms: Legislative members' and the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services' Board terms coincide with their terms of office. After the initial appointments, non-legislative citizen members are appointed to a term of four years. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, are for the unexpired terms. All members may be reappointed. However, no House member can serve more than four consecutive two-year terms, no Senate member can serve more than two consecutive four-year terms and no non-legislative citizen member can serve more than two consecutive four-year terms. The remainder of any term to which a member is appointed to fill a vacancy does not constitute a term in determining the member's eligibility for re-appointment.
3. Qualifications: Board members will have experience that allows them to provide expertise and insight into: best practices in benefits claim service; medical and health care management or cemetery operations; performance measurements and general management principles; or not-for-profit volunteer operations and management.

Article III – Officers

1. **General:** The Board will elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary from its membership. The Commissioner of the Department of Veteran Services is not eligible to serve as Chairperson. A staff member from the Department of Veterans Services may assume some of the recording responsibilities of the Secretary with the concurrence of the Board.
2. **Duties of the Chairperson:** Preside over all meetings and perform the duties required to achieve the Board's purpose. The Chairperson will appoint the chairs and members of the Committees from within the Board membership. The Chairperson will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Veterans Services Foundation (with full voting privileges) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (with no voting privileges).
3. **Duties of the Vice Chairperson:** In the absence of the Chairperson, preside at Board meetings; perform duties as assigned by the Chairperson; assume the responsibilities of the Chairperson in the event the Chairperson can no longer fulfill them; and assume the role of Chairperson for the remainder of the elected Chairperson's term if necessary.
4. **Duties of the Secretary:** Ensure the accuracy of Board minutes and track all Board actions. A staff member from the Department of Veterans Services will record, publish, and distribute minutes of all meetings.
5. **Duties of the Committee Chairpersons:** Coordinate all Committee activities and preside over all Committee activities.
6. **Term of Service:** The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary will serve a two-year term of office. Committee Chairs serve a term of office coincident with that of the Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are eligible for re-election, but can serve no more than two consecutive terms. Likewise, Committee Chairs will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
7. **Elections:** Non-legislative members of the Board are appointed to serve four-year terms that run from July 1 to June 30. Elections of new officers will be held at the first Board meeting following July 1. Candidates for office may either put their own name forward, or may be nominated by another member. Elections will be by voice vote.

Article IV – Committees

Committees are an integral part of Board operations. Working on behalf of the entire Board, committee members perform detailed analytical and investigative work, monitor department activities, and develop policy recommendations for adoption by the full Board. Committees meet as frequently as necessary to exercise their responsibilities. Committees will provide regular reports to the full Board as directed by the Board Chairperson. Because of the detailed work required, committee members are selected for their subject matter expertise.

The Board has three standing committees (Veterans Benefits, Care Centers, and Veterans Cemeteries), along with other ad-hoc committees as required to accomplish the work of the organization, e.g. Budget and Strategic Planning and By-Laws.

1. Veterans Benefits Committee:

- A. Provide oversight, counsel and develop recommendations for the Commissioner, Governor and the Board on the operations, administration, organization, fiscal operation, expansion and policies for the service function of the geographically dispersed service offices throughout the Commonwealth.
- B. Have principal oversight responsibility for all “advisory committees” appointed for the purpose of providing ongoing policy or operational input to the Service Officer operation, recognizing that this activity is a key *raison d’être* for the establishment of the Board of Veterans Services.
- C. Ensure that all relevant policies and hiring practices are followed through oversight of the staffing, selection and hiring of potential service officers and training personnel including supervisory personnel.
- D. Participate with the Office of the Commissioner in an annual review of the operational, financial and organizational policies, procedures to ensure compliance with all state and federal requirements and assist in the development of professional competency testing and performance reviews to ensure the highest quality of expertise.
- E. In conjunction with the Office of the Commissioner, establish the parameters for success to include liaison with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), and its subordinate agencies, the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration operations to develop working relationships and ensure that Virginia’s veterans receive all federal compensation and health care entitlements.

2. Veterans Care Centers Committee:

- A. Provide oversight, counsel and recommendations for the Board and the Commissioner on the operation, administration, organization, fiscal status, expansion and policies for the Commonwealth’s Veterans Care Centers.
- B. Provide principal oversight to the Commissioner for all “advisory committees” appointed for the purpose of providing ongoing policy or operational input to the Care Center Network.
- C. Participate as an essential part of the review and selection process in the hiring of key Care Center administrative, operational and medical staff.

- D. Support the Office of the Commissioner in an annual review of Care Center operational, financial and organizational policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, inspections and reviews.
- E. Provide advice and counsel to the Board and the Commissioner with respect to the disposition of any/all funds earmarked for, or deposited by the Care Centers into the Veterans Service Fund.

3. Veterans Cemeteries Committee

- A. Provide oversight, counsel and recommendations for the Board and the Commissioner on the operation, administration, organization, fiscal status, expansion and policies for the Veterans Cemeteries in the Commonwealth. The Chairperson of the Veterans Cemeteries Committee will maintain liaison with the Commissioner's office, the Administrator of Virginia Veterans Cemeteries and the Superintendent of each cemetery.
- B. Serve as the Board's point of contact for the Virginia veterans community, the Veterans Service Organizations and the general public on matters affecting Virginia Veterans Cemeteries.
- C. In collaboration with the Commissioner's Office, provide oversight of ceremonies and activities at the Veterans Cemeteries throughout the Commonwealth. Members of the Committee will provide a representational presence at scheduled ceremonies and activities at Veterans Cemeteries throughout the Commonwealth.
- D. On behalf of the Board, provide principal oversight to the Commissioner for all "advisory committees" appointed for the purpose of providing ongoing policy or operational input to the Cemetery Administrator. The Committee Chairperson will maintain liaison with the various volunteer fundraising groups that support each cemetery.
- E. Participate as a part of the review process in the hiring of key cemetery staff; capital improvement budget requests (those outside annual operating expenses); and any new initiatives with the USDVA.

4. Budget and Strategic Planning Committee (Ad Hoc):

- A. Review the Budget Findings and Recommendations made by the Department of Planning and Budget and develop a recommendation to the Board on the appropriateness of using the findings of this study group as a baseline for DVS' planning and budgetary activities.
- B. Review impact of enacted legislative amendments on the DVS budget and make recommendations to the Board regarding any policy changes needed for the Department arising from the budgetary amendments.

- C. Assess the adequacy, appropriateness and applicability of the DVS Mission, Vision and Values as articulated in the Commissioner's Annual Report. Make recommendations for changes as appropriate.
 - D. Obtain input from the Board's three standing Committees on strategic initiatives necessary to support each of DVS' primary mission elements (i.e., benefits, cemeteries and care centers).
 - E. Develop an approach aligning measurable objectives for DVS with the budgetary support necessary to successfully accomplish the objectives. Present a report to the Board containing a prioritized list of DVS objectives along with recommendations on how they can be funded.
5. By-Laws Committee (Ad Hoc)
- A. Develop principles for the effective operation of the Board of Veterans Services.
 - B. Delineate the key attributes of the Board of Veterans Services (Authority and Statement of Purpose, Membership, Officers, Committees, Powers and Duties, Meetings and Compensation, Miscellaneous).
 - C. Ensure that all operational guidance for the BVS is consistent with statutory requirements and legislative intent based on the enabling legislation of the Board of Veterans Services and the Department of Veterans Services.
 - D. Review existing by-laws on a regular basis and recommend changes, as appropriate, to the Board.

Article V – Powers and Duties of Board

- 1. Advise and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Veterans Services upon such matters as may arise in the performance of his/her duties.
- 2. Investigate issues related to the provision of care and services to veterans, upon request of the Commissioner of Veterans Services, or the Governor.
- 3. Study all matters affecting the welfare of Virginia citizens who are veterans or dependents or survivors of such veterans and make recommendations to the DVS Commissioner or appropriate staff of DVS.
- 4. Develop recommendations for policies and procedures related to the efficient and effective delivery of services provided by DVS.

5. Establish policies related to the coordinated delivery of veterans services, in consultation with those agencies, entities and organizations, including counties, cities, towns or other political subdivisions of the Commonwealth capable of providing such services.
6. Monitor the administration of all laws concerning veterans and their dependents.
7. Review and advise the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services on the Department's strategic plan.
8. Based on rigorous cost-benefit-value analysis, provide recommendations to the Department of Veterans Services regarding future projects and the acquisition of facilities that may benefit the Commonwealth's veterans, including but not limited to veterans cemeteries and veterans care centers.
9. Provide recommendations to the Department of Veterans Services and the Veterans Services Foundation regarding gifts, grants and other resources from public and private entities and organizations to support veterans services.

Article VI – Meetings and Compensation

1. Meetings: The Board will meet at least three times a year or on the call of the Chairperson.
2. Compensation: Legislative members of the Board shall receive such compensation as provided in § 30-19.12 of the Code, and non-legislative citizen members shall receive such compensation as provided in § 2.2-2813, for the performance of their duties. All members shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825. Funding for compensation and expenses of the members will be provided by DVS.

Article VII –Miscellaneous

1. Quorum: A majority of the voting members of the Board constitutes a quorum.
2. Adoption and Amendment of Bylaws: These Bylaws can be amended by a two-thirds vote cast from voting Board members, if prior notice of the vote has been given.
3. Parliamentary Authority: The adopted parliamentary authority for Board meetings is the current version of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.